THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) The Oil and Natural Gas corporation Ltd. (ONGC) has been involved in exploration of the following basins/areas:

— Cambay Basin in Gujarat.

— Jaisalmar Basin in Rajasthan.

— Krishna-Godavari Basin in Andhra Pradesh.

— Cauvery Basin in Tamilnadu & Pondicherry.

— Bengal Basin in West Bengal.

— Assam shelf and Assam-Arakan Fold Belt in Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura.

— Himalayan Foothills in jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh.

— Gondwana and Vindhyan Basins in Madhya Pradesh and Bihar.

— Eastern offshore areas contiguous to Krishna-Godavari & Cauvery Basins.

— Western Offshore contiguous to Kutch and Saurashtra and also Mumbai and Kerala-Konkan Basins.

(b) and (c) There has been a marginal decline in the production of crude oil by ONGC from its fields. The major reasons for the decline in production of crude oil are:—

(i) decline in production from matured fields.

(ii) geological surprise viz. reduction in initial oil in place and recoverable reserves with reference to original estimates of Neelam Field.

(iii) modernation of production from Bombay field as per recommendation of the consultant.

(iv) unexpected increase in water cut in Bombay High Reservoir, Gandhar Field and Lakwa-Lakhmani field.

(v) continued environmental problems in eastern region.

Identification for Infrastructure Investment

390. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to State:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to new policy of Government a large portion of infrasturcture investment is proposed to be assigned to private enterprise to give a fillip to developmental activities;

(b) if so, whether the areas of infrastructure have been properly identified and allocated to such bodies/agencies to ensure speedy development; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, the areas of private sector investment in large infrastructure sector so far are in power, transport (roads, ports, civil aviation) and tele-communications.

(c) Details about Some of the main areas are given below:—

POWER

The Government of India (GOI) enunciated a private power policy in 1991 aimed at encouraging the flow of private capital to the private sector. The location of a power project in a State is determined keeping in view certain essential techno-economic details such as distance from source of fuel, transportation of fuel, water availability, feasibility of establishing the projects from environmental and forest aspects, feasibility of power evacuation to the load center etc. In this context certain policy and legislative initiatives have already been taken. These, inter-alia, include the seeting up of Central and State Regulatory Commissions, a new hydel policy, a policy on mega projects, legislation enabling transmission as a separate activity, increased emphasis on transmission and evacuation of power, revised counter guarantee scheme, monitoring mechanisms and incentives for renovation and modernisation of existing plants, prescribing rate of return on investment etc.

TRANSPORT SECTOR

The Government have recognised the need for participation of private sector in the development on infrasturcture both for bridging the resource and technological gap as also to bring in greater efficiency by creating a competitive environment. The private sector is being encouraged/considered to take up projects in different areas which include distribution and generation of power, basic telecommunication services as well as cellular services for telecom, development of ports, roads and airports and augmenting supply of wagons and building/manufacturing/financing assets for lease in case of railways.

TELE-COMMUNICATIONS

Telecom equipment manufacturing was completely deregulated in 1991. Value added services (including cellular services) were thrown open to private sector in 1992. Basic services were opened to private participation in 1994 by dividing the country into 21 Telecom Circles and allowing one private operator per Circle to compete with DOT. An independent Telecom Regulatory Authority of India was set up in 1997.

The long distance domestic connectivity and long distance international connectivity are to be reviewed as per the new Telecom Policy 1999.

Infrastructure Equalisation for North-East

391. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) how far the Ninth Five Year Plan can cover the recommendation of Shukla Commission for the infrastructure equalisation plan of North-Eastern States; and

(b) whether the Ninth Five Year Plan for the North-East States are prepared based on the recommendation of Shukla Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) Steps have been taken, through supportive measures for the development of infrastructure and increase of sustainable employment, to ensure that the North Eastern States and Sikkim join the mainstream of national growth. Towards this end, a Non-lapsable Central Pool of Resources has also been constituted for assisting development projects, including in the infrastructure sector, in the North East and Sikkim.

Certain projects (including some recommended by the Shukla Commission) have since been identified for assistance from the Non-lapsable Central Pool of Resources and funds released during the financial year, 1998-99. Similar exercise is being pursued during the current financial year also. The developmental objectives of the North Eastern States (and Sikkim) are also being appropriately pursued through the Five Year Plans and Annual Plans of these States and of the Central Ministries and Organizations.

Non-Lapsable Central Pool for North-East

392. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount collected so far, year-wise, in the non-lapsable Central Pool by Government for the North-Eastern States;

(b) the details of projects sanctioned from this pool by Government State-wise; and

(c) the details of pending schemes of various States in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY